

## Abstract of the Disclosure

1           The method of creating and hosting customized online gatherings ("parties"). One or  
2 more server computers communicate via the Internet with Web browsers operated by users. The  
3 server computer(s) store data defining one or more template web pages that implement one or  
4 more activities in which users may participate. One of the users serves as the host of the online  
5 gathering and provides a guest list identifying other invited users. In response to the host's  
6 selection of a gathering type, and possibly a specific theme for the gathering type, the server  
7 constructs a set of preliminary web pages that conform to the selected gathering type and theme.  
8 Thereafter, the host may further "decorate" the preliminary pages by supplying additional or  
9 replacement text, additional or replacement graphical image files, audio files or video clips that  
10 are incorporated into the template web pages to produce the desired customized online gathering.  
11 The host may designate a time or time range during which the online gathering will occur, and  
12 may provide an invitation list that may include email addresses of users who are then sent email  
13 invitations in advance of the scheduled gathering time. If the gathering is open only to invited  
14 users, access to the online gathering is restricted to those users who present a predetermined  
15 identification code. The online gathering as implemented by the customized Web pages  
16 comprises one or more community activities, such as chat rooms, threaded discussion bulletin  
17 boards, or picture-viewing rooms, in which invited users can view information supplied by the  
18 host or other guests. The server that executes some or all of the functions required for accepting  
19 customization data and a guest list from the host, and that handles the request/response dialog  
20 with the invited users to execute the online gathering, may advantageously take the form of an  
21 application service provider (ASP) server which operates independently of collaborating servers  
22 who utilize the services of the ASP server.